FS Colour Series: Tadelakt Inspired by Barbara Hepworth’s Lustrous Marbles

Description

Doves / Barbara Hepworth / 1927 / Parian marble

The milk-white hue of TADELAKT linen evokes the smooth, polished surfaces of Barbara Hepworthâs ground-breaking and sensuous marble sculptures. A 20th-century woman who both embodied and propelled modernism in Britain, Hepworth revealed her determination and independence early on by travelling alone to Rome in 1924 at the age of 21, after completing her degree at the Royal College of Art. During her two years in Italy, she began studying stone-carving under Giovanni Ardini, who one day remarked, ‘marble changes colour under different people’s hands.’ At that moment, Hepworth realised that the key to working with marble was not to dominate it but to understand and even coax it. âMarble can only be carved with tenderness,â she declared.

Hepworthâs earliest surviving sculpture, *DovesÂ* (1927), indeed manifests the warmth in the artistâs handling of her material and in her personal life at that time. Shortly after arriving in Italy, the artist met another British sculptor, John Skeaping, and married him several months later in Florence. The newlyweds kept doves, perhaps inspiring the work along with Jacob Epsteinâs earlier sculpture of the same name. Hepworthâs intimate piece illustrates what she later described as one of the shapes that had held a special meaning for her since childhood: âtwo forms, which is the tender relationship of one living thing beside another.â

IL019 TADELAKT Softened 100% Linen

The young sculptor carved *DovesÂ* from Greek Parian marble, but it was Italian marble that represented what her native Yorkshire environment could not provide: luminescence. âThere had been something lacking in my childhood in Yorkshire, and that was *light,*â she recalled. âItaly opened for

me the wonderful realm of light.â Throughout her career, Hepworthâs fascination with light manifests itself in her choice of materials, her sculptural practice, her studios in Cornwall, and her descriptions of her work. It even became a medium of sorts. In 1931, several years after she and Skeaping had returned to England, she began creating pierced sculptures that incorporated light into the work and emphasised negative space as much as positive space. ââThe importance of light for the presence of any form has always interested me,â she explained.

Pierced Form / Barbara Hepworth / 1963-4 / Pentelicon marble [the original Pierced FormÂ was destroyed during WW2]

That same year, Hepworth met and fell in love with the British artist Ben Nicholson. She divorced Skeaping and set up home in Hampstead with Nicholson, where they lived until 1939. Their illustrious circle of friends included Pablo Picasso, Jean Arp, Constantin BrÃ¢ncusi, and Piet Mondrian,

placing them at the forefront of modern art and philosophy and inspiring the sculptor to move further into abstraction and geometric shapes. After giving birth to triplets in 1934, Hepworth began focusing on groups of three, as in *Conoid, Sphere and Hollow* (1937). These works negotiated the light, size, space, and tension between their components, as a photograph of *Conoid, Sphere and Hollow* that was taken after the couple moved to St. Ives in 1939 makes clear. Shot against the almost Mediterranean setting of Godrevy Lighthouse, the juxtaposition of sculpture and natural environment reinforces Hepworthâs preoccupation with vertical, spherical, and oval forms and their interrelationships to the human body and the landscape.

Conoid, Sphere and Hollow / Barbara Hepworth / 1937 / marble

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St. Ives, where Hepworth lived until her death in 1975, provided the artist with the luminosity she craved for her works. âI have carved white marble as much as I possibly could, but in this dark, dirty, and cold country, it has not been very easy to place these works. In Cornwall, they are very happy out of doorsâ¦the clean air and brilliant sun make it possible for me to site them easily.â She continued to work with white marble, affirming, âI love marble specially because of its radiance in the light, its hardness, precision, and

response to the sun.â Her marble works, together with her St. Ives studios and home celebrate whiteness and its luminescence.

Group I (Concourse) / Barbara Hepworth / February 4, 1951 / Serravazza marble

FS TADELAKT comes inÂ Mid weightÂ 100% Linen

CATEGORY

1. TEXTILES

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